NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BETHESDA

The Journal

Vol. 25 No. 22 www.cnic.navy.mil/bethesda/ June 13, 2013



U.S. Army Photo by Iain Paterson

Lt. Col. Danny Dudek, Warrior Transition Command, Alexandria, Va., practices cornering techniques during the 2013 Warrior Games Army cycling, swimming and shooting trials held on Fort Bliss, Texas and El Paso, Texas, March 4-8. Dudek, who won three gold medals and a silver medal in swimming events during the 2012 Warrior Games, also made the 2013 Army Warrior Games team, and again won three gold medals at last month's games.

Wounded Officer Leads By Example

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC *Journal* staff writer

"What would you do to get to whatever future you think you've earned, [and] how far do you want to go?"

These were questions Lt. Col. Danny Dudek asked members of the Warrior Transition Brigade (WTB) at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) as he addressed them in the base gymnasium on Friday.

"You have to work for it and it takes commitment, discipline and a desire to overcome things, which often take teamwork," Dudek said.

The combat veteran with more than 20 years of service speaks from experience.

"He's been there and done that," said WTB brigade surgeon, Col. George Kyle, in attendance at the event. "What he has done and is doing with his life and career is impressive," the colonel added. "If we take out a page from his play book, it would help us as individuals and an organization, and it would help us as we assist others to heal."

Dudek is currently Warrior Transition Command deputy chief of staff. He sat in a wheelchair as he told his story to WTB members at Walter Reed Bethesda last week.

"My story is much like your story," Dudek said. "It has a lot of variables, but some things are the same. For me, telling my story is therapeutic and keeps other people's names alive. Telling my story helps me heal and recover."

A native of Wilmington, N.C., Dudek was a field artillery officer serving in Iraq in 2007 with the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. On July 19 of that year, an explosively formed penetrating improvised device, detonated under his Stryker vehicle. It caused him severe spinal cord injury, and killed Cpl. Brandon M. Craig, 25, from Maryland. "He will always be with me," Dudek said.

After being injured, Dudek was able to get on his radio and call in air support. He was air evacuated to a combat support hospital, and was in surgery within an hour of the blast. "That kind of speed is incredible, and from that start, I [received] incredibly, great, supportive health care from the Department of Defense

See **WOUNDED** page 10

Commander's Column



There are a number of upcoming noteworthy celebrations in the next few days, beginning with the Army's 238th birthday tomorrow. We will commemorate this special day with an observance during morning colors and a cake-cutting ceremony in the rotunda of the Tower at 11 a.m.

Today's highly-trained, highly-motivated, and well-equipped U.S. Army evolved from a determined force of colonial troops from various New England militia companies to protect their freedom from the grips of British tyranny. Although they had no unified chain of command, they had the passion and desire to defend their way of life and beliefs.

As we celebrate those courageous colonial troops, we also salute our brothers and sisters who wear the Army uniform today, answering the call for freedom around the world.

Tomorrow, we will also pay tribute to the colors under which those Soldiers and all service members support and defend, as we observe Flag Day.

Due to the freedoms and principles our flag represents, we defend those freedoms and salute her glory 365 days a year.

Sunday, we also celebrate Father's Day. While we celebrate all fathers, we are especially appreciative of those who wear the nation's uniforms and make difficult sacrifices to serve their country, frequently spending days and even years away from their families and loved ones. We salute those fathers for their dedication, and fathers the world over.

Finally, on Monday, we will celebrate the 115th birthday of the Navy Hospital Corps. Hospital corpsmen have served in our nation's hospitals, clinics and on the battlefield since 1898. Their dedication and quality of care have directly contributed to many lives saved and the current, lowest battlefield and non-battlefield mortality rates in history. I salute our hospital corpsmen, and I am proud to serve alongside you every day. Monday, we will celebrate their dedication and service during a special ceremony at 1:30 p.m. in the Memorial Auditorium, followed by a reception in the rotunda.

As you can see, we have much to celebrate and be proud of, and I hope you take this time to honor the many sacrifices of our service members and partake in these upcoming festivities at the Nation's Medical Center.

Commander sends
Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks
MC, USN
Walter Reed National
Military Medical Center

Bethesda Notebook

Army Birthday Celebration

Special recognition for the Army's birthday will be announced during tomorrow's raising of the colors at 7:45 a.m. in front of the Tower. There will also be a cake-cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. in the Tower rotunda at Walter Reed Bethesda to celebrate the 238th birthday of the U.S. Army. The events are open to all.

Hospital Corps Anniversary

Walter Reed Bethesda celebrates the 115th anniversary of the Navy Hospital Corps with a special program Monday at 1:30 p.m. in the Memorial Auditorium in the Tower. There will be an unveiling of a portrait entitled "Corpsman Up," followed by a reception in the Tower's rotunda. Everyone's invited to attend.

Prostate Cancer Support Group

The Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Prostate Cancer Support Group meets twice on June 22 in the River Conference Room, third floor of the America Building (Building 19) adjacent to the Center for Prostate Disease Research. The day session is from 1 to 2 p.m., and the evening session is from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. For more information, contact Vin McDonald at 703-643-2658 or email *vpmjam@aol.com*.

TRICARE 101: Benefits and Referrals

The next monthly TRICARE class for providers, TRICARE 101: Benefits and Referrals, will be on June 19 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the TRICARE Service Center in Building 9, first floor. Space is limited. For more information, contact Tracy Keyser at *tracy.b.keyser@healthnet.com*.

Ask Your Leadership

Ask Your Leadership is a new staff communication tool for you to view and post questions and comments for official responses from the Walter Reed Bethesda command leadership. The tool is on the WRB Intranet page. Click on the Town Hall/Leadership Forum icon, and then choose Ask Your Leadership.

Published by offset every Thursday by Comprint Military Publications, 9030 Comprint Court, Gaithersburg, Md. 20877, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Navy, under exclusive written contract with the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Md. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services. Contents of The Journal are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of Navy. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or Comprint, Inc., of the products or services advertised. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user, or patron. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office, Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Md. News copy should be submitted to the Public Affairs Office, Building 11, lower level, Room 41, by noon one week preceding the desired publication date. News items are welcomed from all installation sources. Inquiries about news copy will be answered by calling 301-295-1803. Commercial advertising should be placed with the publisher by telephoning 301-921-2800. Publisher's advertising offices are located at 9030 Comprint Court, Gaithersburg, Md. 20877. Classified ads can be placed by calling 301-670-1700.

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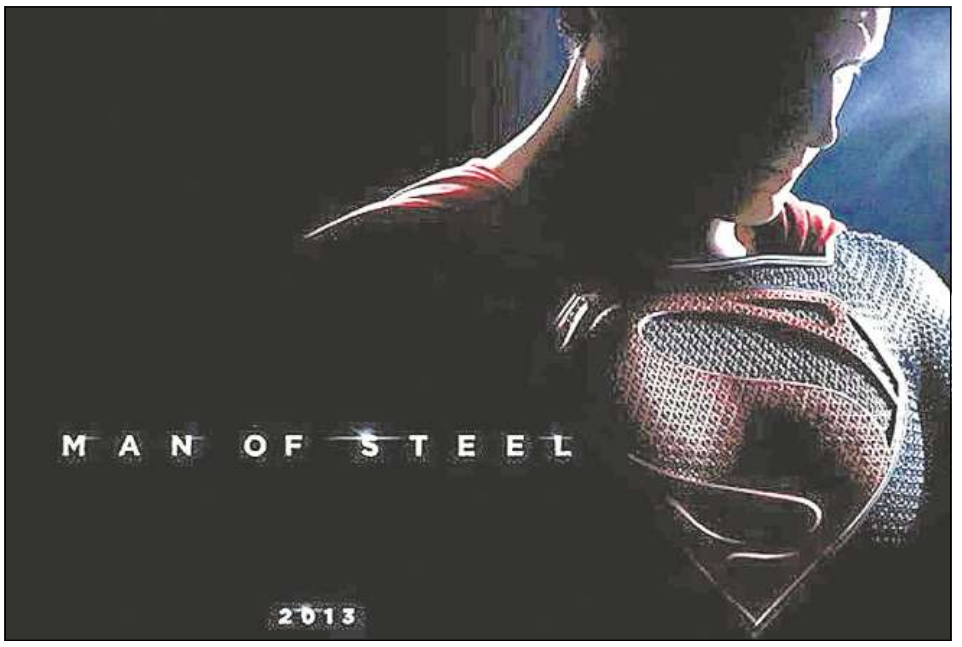
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From Script to the Big Screen: How the Military Appears in Film

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nathan Parde
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer



Warner Bros. Image

The Entertainment Media office of the U.S. Department of Defense reviews the script and grants approval for projects that depict military forces, such as the movie, 'Man of Steel,' which releases Friday. 'Man of Steel' tells the story of a young journalist who is forced to confront his secret extraterrestrial heritage when Earth is invaded by members of his race.

Have you ever wondered what it takes to show military forces and equipment in major motion pictures, such as 'Battleship', 'Avatar', 'Top Gun' or 'Hurt Locker'?

Deputy Director of Entertainment Media, U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) retired Army Col. Vince Ogilvie screens requests for projects that depict the U.S. military in various forms of media, including TV shows, films and documentaries. He visited Naval Support Activity Bethesda recently to explain his role in bringing these projects to life, and his perspective on medical operations at Walter Reed Bethesda.

"My job is to make sure a [media] request for a project meets certain criteria for support - that it highlights the professionalism and abilities of the men and women of the services, has recruiting and retention [potential], and portrays a realistic picture of the Department of Defense," said Ogilvie. "Also, I ask, 'Does a movie have the ability and the backing of a major studio to make it to distribution?'"

As one of only two staff members for Entertainment Media, Ogilvie has his hands full. He shared that he currently has 120 documentaries he's handling, and that he has to read the full script of every project that comes across his desk. When asked, he said that though the workload is his biggest challenge in his job, it's a necessary balancing act "to make sure that documentaries, features, computer games and commercials are all being looked at by the same organization."

During a presentation with approximately a dozen public affairs officers and staff from the National Capital area on June 6, Ogilvie explained that he acts as intermediary between individuals who are requesting media coverage and the branches of service in the DOD.

"The five services are all located in the same building, and I am involved in some way with 90 percent of what they do, so we have developed a reputation and relationship that is very supportive of each other," he said.

With 28 years of military experience that challenged him as an infantry officer, a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne, and a public affairs officer for the Pentagon, Ogilvie has an extensive background to draw on.

Based on that experience, he can negotiate with the filmmakers to reach an agreement for a production, or allow them to produce their project without any military assistance. Every project they take on, however, requires an enormous amount of teamwork, he said.

"For every minute of film that you see in a movie, that's about a week of filming, and the number of people involved in that one minute is 300-500 people," said Ogilvie. "So, whether it be 'Battleship,' 'Iron Man,' 'Godzilla,' or (Superman) 'Man of Steel' - for any of those, we work as a team."

Ogilvie shared that the greatest part of his job is "the satisfaction and joy of reaching out to a large audience to tell the story of our men and women" who serve in the armed forces and medical professions.

"A great number of documentaries are about the great work that is being done by our medical professionals," he said. "With the recent wars that we have been involved in, our Soldiers are coming back with all sorts of wounds and injuries, and our medical staff are meeting that [challenge] with great innovation and great skills. There are people that want to show that to the rest of the world in a documentary form, and we are happy to help them say how we are taking care of these men and women."

Randy Stone of Legislative Affairs for Joint Task Force National Capital Medicine attended the meeting and said he was not aware of the role that the Entertainment Media office plays in bringing the story of the military and medical care to the big screen until after hearing Ogilvie speak.

"It was an educational briefing," said Stone. "I had no idea that DOD has an office that deals with media requests for assistance with movies, video games and documentaries. But, this gives the DOD a great opportunity to ensure movies, video games, etc. get it right and accurately portray DOD capabilities and what it is really like to be a service member and/or a family member of a service member."

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Purple Heart Ceremony Kicks Off Army Birthday Celebration

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC *Journal* staff writer

Three Soldiers recovering at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center received the Purple Heart Medal at Mount Vernon, Va., Monday to commemorate the 238-year-old heritage of the U.S. Army.

The ceremony which honored Sgts. Cory Doane, Sean Karpf, and Spc. Arael Lopez set off a weeklong series of events in the national capital region to celebrate the Army's Birthday.

Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh pinned the three wounded warriors with the Purple Heart after placing a wreath at the tomb of the nation's first president and the Army's first commander, Gen. George Washington. He said he appreciated the opportunity to begin the Army Birthday celebration at the home of George Washington, which also marks the beginning of the Purple Heart Trail.

"While it begins here, it's a series of roadways and trails throughout all 50 of the united states that was designed to pay tribute to the men and women of our armed forces who have been awarded the Purple Heart," McHugh explained.



Photo by Sharon Renee Taylor

Sgts. Cory Doane, Sean Karpf, and Spc. Arael Lopez received the Purple Heart Medal at Mount Vernon, Va., Monday during a commemoration of the U.S. Army's 238-year-old heritage.

"At Washington's first ceremony where he awarded the Purple Heart, he bestowed it upon three enlisted Soldiers. This morning we have the opportunity and the high honor to pay tribute to three of today's enlisted Soldiers," McHugh said. "For 238 years the United States Army has been there to support and defend as today's Soldiers have shown by their service and their sacrifice, with the strictest of integrity."

Doane, 22, of Vancouver, Wash., sustained injury from an improvised explosive device (IED) during a search and destroy mission in Kandahar, Afghanistan on July 3, 2011. The infantryman's injury resulted in a right, below-knee-amputation.

Jacksonville, Florida-native, Karpf, 28, deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan in February 2012. Four months later, he sustained injury from an IED that resulted in a left, below-knee-amputation. "Being here [at Mount Vernon] and actually having [an Army Birthday] celebration is pretty cool," he said.

Lopez, 33, explained how he felt to receive his Purple Heart. "I am honored," he said. His father, Aramis Lopez, said he was moved to tears as he watched McHugh pin the medal on his son's Army uniform at the home of the father of our country.

"I feel so proud and I just couldn't hold myself back. I got tears coming out of my eyes, I'm so proud of him, very proud."

The native of Ponce, Puerto Rico sustained a series of injuries, including wounds to his left arm and hearing loss in his left ear, from a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) explosion followed by a dismounted IED on Aug. 8, 2012, in Wardak Province, Afghanistan.

"Recognizing the young men with the Purple Heart for their wounds on the battlefield - they had to be able to be professionals in order to do that," explained Sgt. Major of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III.

"It's great to be able to have the ability in our country, in our Army to recognize the service and sacrifice of so many millions over the past 238 years, but also to look toward the future," he said. "We've got some great people today in our Army as we've had in the past 238 years and I'm just excited for the opportunity to serve."

Washington established the Purple Heart award in 1782. He designated the badge of military merit available to service members of all ranks who performed with virtuous ambition, unusual gallantry, and extraordinary fidelity, explained Ann Bookout, the 20th Regent of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, the organization that owns and operated the Mount Vernon property for the American people for more than 150 years.

Although the Purple Heart that Washington first established was discontinued after the Revolutionary War, it was reintroduced on Feb. 22, 1932, the 200th anniversary of Washington's birthday.



A Caribbean Afternoon in the America Building

By David A. Dickinson
WRNMMC *Journal* staff writer

For centuries, individuals and families from Caribbean countries have journeyed to America's shores and contributed to the diversity and culture of the United States. These contributions were celebrated at Walter Reed Bethesda on June 6 during National Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

The celebration of Caribbean-American heritage at the Nation's Medical Center featured a steel drum band, salsa dancing and Jamaican foods in the America Building atrium.

The group C.A.I.S.O. (Caribbean American International Steel Orchestra), whose name is derived from a style of music they play, calypso, popular throughout the Caribbean Islands, entertained the medical center community getting the crowd in a festive mood for the salsa dancing and a limbo contest, which followed. The celebration culminated with the serving of Jamaican beef patties, Coco bread, jerk chicken, red beans and rice and other dishes of Caribbean influence.

Army Capt. Aminat Lawal explained to the crowd, there are various dances under the salsa umbrella, including Bachata (Bak-a-ta) and Merengue (mer-Rang-gay). She said she met her fiancée while serving in the Air Force when the two danced together when stationed in Germany three years ago. "He commented that I danced funny, so I learned how to Merengue, Dominican style, knowing that I'd see him again," she added.

The Bethesda Multicultural Committee, chaired by Army Sgt. 1st Class Jason Zielske, sponsored the event. Zielske said his job as the committee chair has been gratifying, "in part due to having the opportunity to promote inclusion and diversity in the Walter Reed Bethesda workplace."

Multicultural events provide opportunities for patients, staff, family members and visitors to celebrate different ethnic backgrounds and lifestyles, Zielske added.

In his 2013 proclamation for National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, President Barack Obama stated, "For centuries, the United States and nations in the Caribbean have grown alongside each other as partners in progress. National Caribbean-American Heritage Month is a time to celebrate those enduring achievements. Through every chapter of our Nation's history, Caribbean Americans have made our country stronger — reshaping our politics and reigniting the arts, spurring our movements and answering the call to serve. Caribbean traditions have enriched our own, and woven new threads into our cultural fabric. Again and again, Caribbean immigrants and their descendants have reaffirmed America's promise as a land of opportunity — a place where no matter who you are or where you come from, you can make it if you try."



Photos by David A. Dickinson

Patients, staff and visitors at Walter Reed Bethesda participate in a limbo contest during Walter Reed Bethesda's Caribbean-American Heritage Month observance on June 6 in the America Building atrium.

The Bethesda Multicultural Committee sponsors approximately 12 events yearly. "The real challenge is opening people's eyes to the benefit of cultural diversity and getting rid of any negative attitudes towards differences," Zielske said.

Katrina Skinner, a contractor at the medical center said, "I have been to several Caribbean islands and I thought the celebration here today was a good representation of island life," Ms. Skinner continued, "It reminds me that I need a vacation soon!"

People interested in participating in future Bethesda Multicultural Committee events, can contact Zielske at 301-400-3542.



C.A.I.S.O. performs at Walter Reed Bethesda's Caribbean-American Heritage Month observance on June 6 in the America Building atrium.

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Department of Pathology and Lab Services Earns Commander's Cup



Photo by Bernard S. Little

Members of the winning 2013 Commander's Cup team, the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Services, pull their way to victory in the tug-of-war competition on June 7 in front of the Tower.



Photos by Bernard S. Little

Teams from Orthopedics and the Marines compete during the Commander's Cup volleyball competition on June 6 in the Building 17 gymnasium.

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC *Journal* staff writer

After heated competitions in 10 events, the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Services earned Walter Reed Bethesda's Second Annual Commander's Cup on June 7.

Chief of Staff Army Col. Ramona Fiorey presented the winners the Commander's Cup trophy last Friday in the rotunda of the Tower at Walter Reed Bethesda following the competition's last event, the grueling tug-of-war, also won by the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Services.

"We attribute our success to a relentless commitment to teamwork and an unparalleled dedication to each other, whether we won or lost," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Jamie Barann, of the winning team. "We are the lab-excellence in action!"

This year, 21 teams competed for the Commander's Cup title, up from five in the event's inaugural competition last year, according to lead organizer for the event, Chief Hospital Corpsman Derek Eaton. Also, last year's event had participants primarily from the medical center who were service members, and this year, participation was expanded to the entire base that include military members of all ranks and services, civilians and contractors also participated on teams during the competition.

"It was a terrific week," Eaton said. Events began June 3 and were held every day throughout the week. Competition was held in weightlifting, dodge ball, volleyball, flag football, 3-on-3 basketball, soccer, bowling, swimming, ultimate Frisbee and the tug-of-war.

"The Commander's Cup is a way of building teamwork and increasing morale on base," Eaton added.

Teams earned points based on how they finished each event, with winners earning 25 points; second place, 15 points; and third place, 10 points.

Eaton said the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Services "put their heart and soul" into the competition, especially the tug-of-war, which earned the winners 50 points. There were no second- or third-place points awarded in the event.

The Marines placed second overall for the Commander's Cup. "They went hard in every event," Eaton said.

The Department of Pathology and Laboratory Services will keep the Commander's Cup trophy until next year's competition when they will have the opportunity to defend their title. "They have bragging rights until then as being 'the best,'" Eaton said.



The winning 2013 Commander's Cup team, the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Services, accepts the trophy from Walter Reed Bethesda Chief of Staff Col. Ramona Fiorey (third from right) and event lead organizer, Chief Hospital Corpsman Derek Eaton (second from right), following 10 intense sporting competitions, on June 7 in the Tower's rotunda.



file photo by Sharon Renee Taylor

The Mind-Body Program, part of the Integrated Health Services in Internal Medicine at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, teaches techniques such as meditation, yoga and guided imagery to help staff reduce stress. Integrated Health Services will be among the many resources on display during Resiliency Week, June 17-21, at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Resiliency Week to Promote Care for the Caregiver

By Sarah Marshall
WRNMMC *Journal* staff writer

To offer stress management skills and reinforce the value of maintaining overall health, a number of activities will be held for staff members at Walter Reed Bethesda during Resiliency Week, June 17-21.

"Resiliency" is being able to bounce back and recover when faced with adversity, and the weeklong event will provide staff with the tools needed to be able to do just that, explained Navy Cmdr. Dwayne Buckingham, service chief of the Resiliency and Psychological Health Service at Walter Reed Bethesda.

"We're trying to promote and provide individuals with coping skills that can get them through [stress]," Buckingham said.

With the theme, "You Matter," Resiliency Week is a first at the command, and will become an annual event, Buckingham said. It's important to continue educating staff members about caring for themselves and being resilient, so they can better care for others and ensure the command meets its mission of quality care, he added.

Self care is also an important part of coping with stress, as is being able to balance life and work, explained Lt. Cmdr. Michelle Tsai, deputy service chief of the Resiliency and Psychological Health Service at Walter Reed Bethesda.

To help promote self care, balance and resiliency, some of the events in store next week include several creative arts workshops, yoga sessions, massages, and opportunities to speak with dietitians, chaplains, and members from the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Tsai said. She added that there will also be a Staff Talent Show on Thursday, June 20, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Laurel Clark Memorial Auditorium, during which lunch will be served and prizes will be awarded.

"We want to recognize our staff talents as well, as part of this event," Tsai said.

Staff will also have a chance to listen to resiliency expert James McGinnis, from the Resilience Institute of Washington DC, Tsai said. McGinnis will be the guest speaker at the Resiliency Week opening ceremony on Monday at 8:30 a.m., taking place at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence. All are welcome to attend.

During the week-long event, the Resiliency and Psychological Health Service, under the Department of Psychology, hopes to promote what they have to offer. Tsai explained there are many resources available at the medical center to help staff in times of stress and hardship.

"If people want assistance or help, we serve as a hub, so we can help direct them to resources that might meet their needs," Tsai said. "We work with a lot of other collaborative services."

Among the many collaborative services, the Resiliency team works with the Dog Assisted Therapy Program. Resiliency staff members bring the program's therapy dogs around the medical center to do "morale checks," Tsai said.

The Resiliency team frequently walks around the medical center to check in and connect with staff members, to see how they're doing, Buckingham explained. The therapy dogs - Bobbie, Laura Lee and Archie - help boost morale and serve as an "ice breaker," he added.

"When individuals approach us, and they're interacting with the therapy dogs, we have an opportunity to talk to them about resiliency and stress," Buckingham said.

A staff member may be stressed, or tense, he said, but when they see the dogs, it can help calm their nerves and open up about how they're feeling. "There have been so many times staff has said, 'You made our day, just by bringing the dogs,'" Tsai added.

In addition to collaborating with other command services, the Resiliency and Psychological Health Service provides training on topics such as burnout, fatigue, resiliency and depression.

For more information about Resiliency services, or Resiliency Week, call 301-400-1974, or email *wrnmmc-resiliency@health.mil*.

Walter Reed Bethesda Pediatricians Earn National Research Awards

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC *Journal* staff writer

Two pediatrics residents at Walter Reed Bethesda recently earned national awards for their research work in pediatric patient care.

Navy Lt. (Dr.) Jack McDonnell and Army Capt. (Dr.) Luis Lozada received the awards during the Pediatric Academic Society Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in May.

McDonnell earned the Resident Research Award of the Academic Pediatrics Association, and Lozada, the Housestaff Research Award of the Society for Pediatric Research.

McDonnell researched "Family Income and Outcomes of Pediatric Renal Transplant Recipients from 1997-2006," while Lozada's work involved "Hyperbilirubinemia as a Risk Factor for Autism."

The son of Sailors, McDonnell explained his project concerns the different factors affecting outcomes of pediatric kidney transplant recipients. "We found [recipients] with lower incomes did worse in terms of long-term outcome, including kidney graft failure and death. We hope [this research] will enhance the delivery of care to renal transplant patients, both kids and adults, and by extension the delivery of care to lower income families with other chronic diseases," he said.

The Navy lieutenant, who's been on active duty for three years, said he followed his parents into the Navy because "he grew up hearing great stories about Navy life."

"[My parents] met in the Navy," said the Cleveland native. "[They] spoke highly of their experiences."

McDonnell added he was drawn to medicine because "[it] is a great way to help other people, especially in their moments of need." In regards to pediatrics, he explains, "I found that I enjoy working with kids." He also said practicing medicine in the military fulfills a desire "to do something for my country."

Lozada, a native of Cuba, explained his research work revealed, "Autism is very common. Every year, the number of kids diagnosed increases, [and] the causes of it are not known. I was intrigued to find out if jaundice, right after birth, is associated with increased risk of autism, as some studies suggest, [and it appears so]. Providers aware of the possible association may increase screening and early referral of children at risk."



Photo by Bernard S. Little

Navy Lt. (Dr.) Jack McDonnell recently earned the Resident Research Award of the Academic Pediatrics Association for his work entitled "Family Income and Outcomes of Pediatric Renal Transplant Recipients from 1997-2006."

The Army captain, who has been in the military 14 years, said other than medicine, he was "never interested in anything else," growing up in Cuba, where he attended medical school. "Since moving to the United States, I have continued to work in obtaining the medical certifications needed to practice medicine here.

"Working as a pediatrician is the most rewarding job there is," Lozada added. "I did pediatrics/neonatology in Cuba, now I am finishing pediatric residency again, and will start neonatology fellowship in July. You can say I have to love it in order to do both twice. I am very grateful to have the opportunity to do the training again."

Military Will Work With Congress to Combat Sexual Assault

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

Military leaders look forward to working with Congress to get the tools needed to combat the scourge of sexual assault in the ranks, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey told the Senate Armed Services Committee today.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said sexual assault is a crime "that demands accountability and consequences. It betrays the very trust on which our profession is founded."

Military officials are working diligently to change the climate in the services that allows this crime, the chairman said. Lasting change means changing behaviors, Dempsey said. "We're taking a comprehensive approach that focuses on prevention, victim advocacy, investigation accountability and assessment, all as part of our solemn obligation to safeguard the health of the force," he added.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Teddy Wade

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testifies on sexual assault in the military before the Senate Armed Services Committee in Washington, D.C., June 4.

The military must do more to safeguard victims while preserving the rights of those accused, the chairman acknowledged. "We remain open to every idea and option to accelerate meaningful institutional change," he said.

Congress has proposed legislation to address the problem. Dempsey said the military looks forward to working with Congress on the issue. "I've been attentive to every piece of legislation," he said. "There are many reasonable recommendations on the table."

In a letter to the committee, Dempsey said he sees merit in initiatives to prohibit those convicted of sexual assault from joining the military and to oblige administrative discharge for those convicted of sexual assault. He also said he sees merit in the proposal to require commanders to report sexual offenses promptly to the next higher commander, and to increase transparency and accountability of commanders' actions and decisions.

A congressionally mandated nine-member panel is taking up these and other initiatives. The panel can look at the problem, assess the second- and third-order effects of any changes and make its recommendations. "We need the panel to deliberate and to deliver on a more accelerated timeline," Dempsey said. Meanwhile, he added, the military will continue moving full speed ahead on the issue.

"We will be actively implementing my strategic direction on prevention [of] sexual assault and the department's new sexual assault prevention and response plan," he said.

In a force stand-down throughout the Defense Department, which must be completed by July 1, Dempsey said, the services will conduct command climate surveys and conduct refresher training for response coordinators and victim advocates. The services seek to improve victim counsel and treatment and more, he added.

Dempsey asked the senators to be very careful before changing the responsibilities of commanders under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Commanders have a key role to play in preventing and punishing sexual assault, and that shouldn't be weakened, he said.

Hard Work Pays Off for Uniformed College Grads at NSAB

By Jeremy K. Johnson
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

Thirteen military and civilian students were awarded bachelor degrees at a ceremony held Friday in Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's (WRNMMC) Memorial Auditorium. The graduates, most of whom work at WRNMMC, all received bachelor of science degrees from Southern Illinois University.

According to Cindy LeFebvre, the 12 students who walked across the stage to receive a degree in health care management truly have something to be proud of. To graduate, they had to sacrifice a large amount of personal time.

"The program requires the students to attend classes every other weekend, Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.," she explained. Armed Forces Blood Bank Center lab technician Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Joelle Meyindjou is an active duty Sailor and one of those students. She's married with two children, one of whom is autistic.

"It was difficult. It was a lot of juggling my time," she said, "but my husband and mother were also there to help."

LeFebvre said the course takes up to two years to complete and involves intense coursework that has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.



Photo by Jeremy K. Johnson

Southern Illinois University (SIU) Professor Dr. Beth Freeburg (left) confers a medal signifying "Cum Laude" graduate status upon Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Joelle Meyindjou. Thirteen SIU graduates including active duty and veteran military personnel received bachelor of science degrees at a ceremony held Friday in Memorial Auditorium at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

"That accreditation is important," said LeFebvre, "because it affects the programs students will apply for next, including commissioning programs."

The program is a hybrid program, meaning students of the health care management program attend classes in person and online. Despite the dedication it requires, Meyindjou says it was worth it and that, "If I can do this with all the challenges I had, anybody can. It's just the commitment that needs to be there."

As the graduates sat in the audience waiting for their scrolls, several speakers voiced their support and congratulations.

Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) Commanding Officer Fritz Kass encouraged the group to dream big. "Today's goal has been met," he observed, "but it's one more piece of the puzzle to help you all meet your dreams.

Those dreams are important, and you need to keep them alive, you need to keep them breathing, and dream big. Most of us will never exceed whatever expectations we set in our dreams. If you're never going to go any bigger than that, then you might as well set them pretty high - do not put a ceiling on yourselves." NSAB's Command Career Counselor Master-At-Arms 1st Class Stacy Leverett says now that their degrees are done, they should consider submitting their transcripts to their respective services to ensure the degree is reflected in their official military record.

"They can also submit their degrees through the Joint Service Transcript program," she said. The program allows Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Army personnel to track their education and degrees - with the Navy adding the update to a Sailor's OMPF (official military personnel file).

A Worthy Contribution



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class John Hamilton

Earlier this year, the Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) Navy Exchange ran a month-long fund drive offering a $5 coupon, which extended a discount on select merchandise throughout the store. The proceeds from the sale of the coupons, $12,187.92, was donated to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) Tuesday to support NMCRS programs and Sailors and Marines in need. Pictured, from left, are NEX Bethesda Store Manager Robin Dale, NSAB Commanding Officer Frederick Kass, NEX Bethesda General Manager Rick Pimentel, and NMCRS Bethesda Director Gillian Connon.



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WOUNDED

Continued from 1

and my country doing everything they could do to get me back."

The lieutenant colonel was flown to Germany, and then to the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) in Washington, D.C., within three days of being injured in Iraq. He remained at WRAMC for about a month, before going back to his home at Joint Base Lewis-McChord for more rehabilitation.

Bed-ridden for almost three months, Dudek eventually was able to stand again, and can now do limited walking with the aid of crutches and braces. He explained he faced a lot of frustrations, "but did the best he could to keep pushing forward."

"There was a goal at the end," the lieutenant colonel said. One goal was to see his favorite football team, the Chicago Bears, play a game. He got that opportunity when the Bears played the Seattle Seahawks in Seattle, Wash., and he went to the game. "That was what got me out of the hospital, being able to be on the field with the Chicago Bears."

Another goal of Dudek's was to go to his welcome home ceremony. "I was able to stand and talk with some of the guys in the vehicle with me when it was blown up. Those are the things most important to me, being with the Soldiers and people I enjoy."

He was able to spend more time with those Soldiers when he had an opportunity to become Joint Base Lewis-McChord's Warrior Transition Battalion's executive officer, and then its commander in 2009. He was responsible for about 600 Soldiers with long-term or complex medical issues as the battalion commander.

Dudek explained the Army had to make a deliberate decision to let him, "a paralyzed lieutenant colonel," command a battalion, but he also had to show his leaders he had "the commitment not to let them down."

He spent two years in that position, and said he learned as much as he could to share with his troops. "I tried to give many of the Soldiers I had as much as I could — some of the good lessons that I learned. I asked questions, I talked with my providers, and I stayed constantly engaged in what was going on [with my care]."

Despite his involvement, Dudek said there were times when frustration surfaced that he could not overcome alone. "All these things that I felt were obstacles I had put in front of me, even at this point, starting to melt away when other people started to explain to me why I was wrong." He said this was how he became involved in adaptive sports and the Warrior Games, athletic competitions for wounded troops.

Last year, participating in his first Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Dudek earned three gold medals and one silver medal in swimming, competing with approximately 200 athletes from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guards and Great Britain military. At this year's Warrior Games last month, Dudek earned gold medals in the 50-meter freestyle, 100-meter freestyle and 50-meter backstroke.

In addition to swimming, athletes also compete in sitting volleyball, wheelchair basketball, cycling, track and field, archery and competitive shooting during the Warrior Games.

Dudek described the experience as "awesome with great competition." He has also participated in other adaptive reconditioning activities, including hand-cycle races, triathlons, and two Army Ten-Milers.

"Every time I go out to Colorado Springs, or every time I come here [to Walter Reed Bethesda], I get to meet amazing people who are taking whatever situation they are in, and making the best of it," Dudek said.

He explained that since his paralysis, he puts himself "outside of his comfort zone" when he goes out in public, and still has to overcome some anxiety, but he does so with the help of others.

The Army officer added one of the things he's most proud of in his career, is being the principle author of the Army's Comprehensive Training Plan (CTP), which serves as the heart of the Warrior Care and Transition Program. Every Soldier recovering at a Warrior Transition Unit develops a personalized plan that will lead them back to active duty, or a successful transition to civilian life.

"No one knows better than you where you want to end up," Dudek added. "You have to articulate that to people. It's not really about them, but about you. You [have] to get outside your comfort zone to articulate to the people around you [the help you may need], and understand the processes around you. You're not going to do it alone; it takes us all."

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Photo by Lt. Cmdr. Brent Dennis

Front Row: Capt. Carey Sill, Yeoman 3rd Class Dniqua Swindell, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Maya Torrence, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Carlene Ellis, Master Chief Hospital Corpsman Clint Garrett. Back row: Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Kingsley Adu, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jeffrey May, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Alexander Bassene, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Agerneh Demissie, Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Ryan Boudreau. Not photographed: (Leave) Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Brianna Von Cannon.

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